



## SYNOPSIS OF NATIONAL SECURITY CRISIS IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO; A PUSH FACTOR TO FORCED MIGRATION

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### Abstract

The study was conducted in Limpopo Province, Musina, which is located in the northern part of South Africa. This qualitative study aimed at finding out how threats to national security encourage forced migration. The researcher conducted interviews with refugees from Democratic Republic of Congo. Illegal immigrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo participated in this qualitative study whereby the researcher conducted a focus group discussion with immigrants. There was a gender mix in this group discussion, however, the males dominated because there is a large number of males immigrants as compared to females. The issue of security is a serious concern to the people of DRC. The majority of the illegal immigrants from DRC who are found in Musina left their home country because of a lack of security and protection from their government. The immigrants are of the view and opinion that the leadership of the country does not care about their safety. Moreover, the immigrants were forced to join the rebels in their country at a very young age, hence they decided to leave. National security threat is one of the push factors that make civilians want to flee their own country to neighbouring countries. The immigrants from DRC do not wish to go back home, they found a new home in South Africa. However, there are some challenges that they experience and they found them to be better because they are not life-threatening challenges. This was expected because they are in a foreign land. Findings from this study reveal that the lack of commitment by the government to ensure that there is safety in DRC is the contributing factor to push migration.

KeyWords: *National Security, Threats, Illegal immigrants, Human Mobility, DRC*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Democratic Republic of Congo has for a very long time experienced new wars in a form of political unrest, civil insecurity, and military disputes, resulting in extreme poverty and forced migration. For more than 15 years after the formal conclusion of the Second Congo War, the eastern Congo's military landscape remains highly fragmented and extremely volatile, with new armed groups constantly being instituted, others disintegrating, and others are still joining forces into different factions. There is an increase in the number of armed actors despite an inclusive peace process which was introduced in 2003. Sexual violence in conflict continues to shatter lives and scar communities around the world (Vlassenroot, Mudinga, and Musamba, 2020, Zhang, Qi, He, Hee, Takesue, Yan, and Tang, 2021).

Migration is about population movement and the debate revolves around voluntary migration as opposed to forced migration. Population movement is witnessed globally, and this has been the case for centuries and is mainly driven by various factors, which include among other things lack of security, job opportunities and poverty (Mlambo, 2018). However, in the African continent, there are lot of immigrants who flee their countries due to several factors. Even though it is difficult to conceptualize, let alone to measure the degree of voluntariness about migration processes, the generally agreed interpretation is that voluntary migration concerns displacements in search of

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economic opportunities. Forced migration, by contrast, is associated with the threat and/or fear that force people to flee their place of residence in search of security and safety. Forced migrations are also divided into two categories depending on the causes of displacement. Their causes and consequences also present socio-political and economic factors specific to African historical realities (Rwamatwara, 2005). Refugees are different from voluntary migrants in that they have to leave their homeland against their will, with no positive motivation to settle anywhere else (Rwamatwara, 2005).

Adepoju (1995) points out that Africa is a home for the world's largest refugee population and refugees differ from other migrants in that refugees are forced to leave their homes because of a change in their environment, which makes it impossible to continue life as they have known it. An external force to leave their homes and go elsewhere coerces them. Therefore, it is for this reason that the author investigate how lack of security influence forced population movement in Democratic Republic of Congo because of domestic security threats. Refugees from DRC migrate to the neighbouring countries to find peace and safety.

**1.1.Statement Of The Problem**

It was in 1988 under the apartheid regime when Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) started to engage on trade relations with South Africa and that marked the beginning of migration from Zaire to South Africa. South Africa started to employ doctors in public hospitals, engineers to work in mines and academics from Zaire. Migration from Zaire to South Africa continued through the 1990s; in the period around the fall of Mobutu Sese Seko in May 1997, South Africa was a haven and a refuge for Mobutuists, Zaire nationals. At around the year 1990 South Africa started to receive quite a large number of migrants from Zaire, and the move was characterised by economic uncertainty, political instability and conflicts. By the end of the year 1992, South Africa had plus twenty three thousands (+23000) migrants from Zaire, now DRC. However, majority of them were involved in trade then (Steinberg, 2005).

After the assassination of Lumumba, the country started to experience civil war and this led to forced migration where many migrated to South Africa as refugees. No domestic security in DRC and women and young girls become the victims of rape (Mbombo, 2017). Democratic Republic of Congo remains an insecure country in the SADC region, prone to outbreaks of conflict and where civilians experience personal threats from armed forces, primarily because the supposed 'settlement' to the Congo not resolve many of their underlying problems. The political turmoil in eastern part of DRC especially in Kivu has created hundreds of thousands of temporary and long-term displacement of persons (Larmer, Laudati and Clark, 2013).

Migration affects each and every country in the global village, either illegal or legal. People will always migrate because they are forced by circumstances in their own countries, and this could be a result of a lack of security in their home country, fear of prosecution, war, or any other threats that threaten human life. This is a highly diverse and complex phenomenon that transcends societies, cultures, and races. It is a phenomenon that has continued to impact and contribute to the transformation of the entire facets of various countries changing the racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-cultural composition of their population. Immigrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo have witnessed decades of persistent armed conflict and forced displacement. Moreover, DRC remains unstable and the most unsafe country, plagued by a diverse array of armed actors, foreign armed groups, rebels, local militias, and a largely undisciplined national army that often forms temporary and opportunistic alliances in order to serve their own interests (Tamm and Lauterbach, 2011).

**1.2.Objectives Of The Study**

- To determine how lack of Security in DRC influences migration.
- To find out the impact of national security threats on forced migration.



### 1.3. Securitisation Theory

The study adopted a securitisation theory, Securitisation theory shows that national security policy is not a natural given, but carefully designated by politicians and decision-makers. According to securitisation theory, political issues are established as extreme security issues to be dealt with urgently when they have been labeled as dangerous, intimidating, threatening, and alarming to the whole nation. In order for a country to prevent everything from becoming a security issue or threat, such a country must follow certain steps in order to succeed and such securitisation steps are as follows (1) identification of existential threats, (2) emergency action and (3) effects on inter-unit relations by breaking free of rules (Gearon, 2017, Eroukmanoff, 2017).

However, it is important to note that securitising actors are not limited to politicians. The law enforcement agencies like the police, intelligence services, customs, immigration services, border guards, and the military all play a very significant role in defining the security landscape. Moreover, the agencies continue to operate within a field of security, which is characterised by competition over the right knowledge of the threat and other risks associated, as well as competition over the right solution. It is important that security agencies protect the nation, no matter what their objectives are; securing the nation must always be a priority (Eroukmanoff, 2017). There will always be disagreements and confrontations, which will occur between security professionals as stated by Bigo, Bonditti, and Olsson (2016). Their argument is that they are still guided by a set of common beliefs and practices.

Securitising actors take security threats objectively and seek to solve them by undertaking various missions. In addition, there are also functional actors who can influence the dynamic of the field of security but who do not have the power to move an issue above politics because politicians are the ones to make the final decision. Securitisation process begins with an actor claiming that the existence of an object is threatened and such must be portrayed as an existential threat, meaning that if such a threat is not addressed, the people will suffer the consequences and this may lead to people being scattered all over the world because of those threats. It is important that death must be avoided by all means possible and to avoid that, measures must be taken and they must be taken immediately, thus moving the issue outside the normal realm of politics and into the extraordinary realm of security for the sake of the nation. As indicated earlier, security agencies have too much responsibility in addressing the security challenges and this must not be politicised (Seegers, 2012).

The author chose the securitisation theory because it is very relevant to this study since the study addresses problems of security in the origin country of the immigrants where the immigrants are forced to flee their homes as a result of lack of security. The security agencies who are trusted with the responsibility to protect the society are not doing enough to protect the nation and there is a lack of political will from the politicians in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Moreover, the host country also experience security challenges because the refugees when they flee to South Africa they come without documents and they stay for long time without being documented. The criminals who flee their country as a results of this new wars see an opportunity in countries like South Africa, when they are integrated with the host communities and they do not find jobs, they end up engaging in unlawful activities for their survival.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Lack Of The National Security

National security has suddenly become a big-time business and a concern to a number of countries in both Africa and Europe. The officials and military or security officers diverted security votes and expenditure on defence to personal coffers. The incidences of bombing and attendant threat to national security in Nigeria, as a political intrigue unleashed on the nation by ruling elites to try and cover up corruption and other illegal activities (Adebakin and Raimi, 2012).

According to United Nations Development Programme (1994), they posit that human security (an aspect of national security) refers to freedom from fear and freedom from want, safety from threats such as hunger, disease, and repression as well as protection from sudden and harmful

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disruptions in the patterns of daily life whether in homes, in jobs or in communities. National security is an activity that ensures the protection of a country, persons, and properties of the community against future threats, danger, mishaps, and all other forms of risks. However, Babangida (2011) views national security as the physical protection and defense of the society as a whole and territorial integrity, of which it is a part, but also the promotion of the economic well-being and prosperity of a country in a safe and secure environment that promotes the attainment of the national interests and those of the foreign partners that the country interacts with. Immigration is seen as a ‘threat to national security’, for instance, shifts immigration from a low-priority political concern to a high-priority issue that requires action, such as securing borders. However, some immigrants from countries where their lives are threatened see international human mobility as an option for their safety. If Illegal immigration is not controlled it could adversely affect the stability and security of both destination and transit countries (Rezouni, 2010).

**2.2. Forced Migration (Push factor)**

Millions of people around the world have been forced to abandon their homes due to conflict, either as international refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs). In 2010, there were an estimated 11 million refugees and over 27 million IDPs worldwide. Scholars have not found a clear definition of forced migration and there is no universally accepted definition of forced migration yet in international public law, in the everyday practice of key international organizations dealing with migration, or in the academic literature on the subject. Hence, the definition is quite broad. However, one of the most-referenced definitions in the field of migration is provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) which understands forced migration as a migratory movement in which an element of pressure exists, and this includes threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes (e.g. movements of refugees and internally displaced persons as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects (Klaus and Pachocka, 2019).

According to Castle, de Hass, and Miller (2014) in push-pull models, various causes are mentioned among the factors pushing migrants out of their own country or country of origin. However, economic and demographic factors prevail, and environmental and political factors also raise their ugly head but are not sufficiently highlighted. The political factors and lack of national security are the ones dominating especially in the African continent. The IOM underlines that causes of forced migration are either natural or man-made, the Forced Migration Online (FMO) identifies three main causal factors forcing people to migrate and leave their home countries. The number one cause is conflicts, followed by development policies and projects, and the third one is disasters. The first factor, and the one most recognized, is conflict-induced displacement can be understood as a situation where the population is forced to leave their homes for one or more reasons and where the state authorities are unable or unwilling to protect them. This is a lack of national security by the government. It can entail armed conflict including civil war; generalized violence; and persecution on the grounds of nationality, race, religion, political opinion or social group”. These people are in most cases considered refugees and are subject to international refugee law (Mc Dowell, 2014, Klaus and Pachocka, 2019).

In their study, The economics of forced migration, Ruiz and Vargas-Silva, 2012, indicated that forced migration situations tend to have specific characteristics that distinguish this phenomenon from the voluntary migration process whereby people just migrate without any push factor, therefore, many of the conclusions and policy suggestions which result from exploring voluntary migration do not apply to forced migration. Migrants are sometimes forced to migrate not only by persecuting governments but also by impending famine, or more generally by threats to their livelihoods emerging from the general instability and disorganization that characterize situations of chronic conflict. There is quite a large number of people who flee across international borders in search of refuge. Some of them may seek asylum under international law, whereas others may prefer to remain anonymous, perhaps fearing that they may not be granted asylum and will be returned to the country from whence they fled. Since the end of the Cold War, there has



been an escalation in the number of armed conflicts around the world, the African continent included, and is still experiencing domestic conflicts. Many of these more recent conflicts have been internal conflicts based on national, ethnic, or religious separatist struggles, e.g., the ethnic tension in Ruanda (Taghizadeh, Sayedi, Moghadam, Bahreini, Abbasi, and Saeidi, 2017).

### **2.3.Types of Forced Migrants**

There are different types of forced migrants globally. The following are the group experiencing force migration:

### **2.4.Refugees**

The term ‘refugee’ has a long history of usage to describe a person who has sought refuge’ in broad and non-specific terms. However, there is also a legal definition of a refugee, which is enshrined in the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Article 1 of the Convention defines a refugee as a person residing outside his or her country of nationality, who is unable or unwilling to return because of a ‘well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a political social group, or political opinion.

### **2.5.Asylum seekers**

Asylum seekers are people who have moved across an international border in search of protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention, but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been determined.

### **2.6.Internally Displaced Persons**

The most widely used definition of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is one presented in a 1992 report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which identifies them as ‘persons who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, and who are within the territory of their own country. Sometimes referred to as ‘internal refugees’, these people are in similar need of protection and assistance as refugees but do not have the same legal and institutional support as those who have managed to cross an international border (Taghizadeh *et al*, 2017).

### **2.7.The Development displaces**

People who are compelled to move as a result of policies and projects implemented to supposedly enhance ‘development’. These include large-scale infrastructure projects such as dams, roads, ports, and airports; urban clearance initiatives; mining and deforestation; and the introduction of conservation parks/reserves and biosphere projects. Affected people usually remain within the borders of their country. People displaced in this way are sometimes also referred to as ‘oustees’, ‘involuntarily displaced’, or ‘involuntarily resettled.

### **2.8.Trafficked individuals**

There is quite many people who are moved by deception or coercion for the purposes of exploitation. The profit of trafficking people comes not from their movement, but from the sale of their sexual services or labor in the country of destination. The trafficked person may be physically prevented from leaving, or be bound by debt or threat of violence to themselves or their family in their country of origin. Like smuggling, by its very clandestine nature, figures on the number of people being trafficked are extremely difficult to obtain. The recent global tightening of asylum admissions by different countries has forced people to turn to smuggle because of desperation (Feingold, 2005, Taghizadeh *et al*, 2017). It was further mentioned by Eselebor and Kehinde (2020) is an offense to smuggle people and drugs into a foreign land but the criminal enterprise keeps growing, in other words, the criminals continue to engage in these illegal activities. The perpetrators are also linked to terrorism, the drug trade, and the smuggling of goods, small arms, and light weapons.

### **2.9.Forced migration flows have four characteristics:**

- a) They take place on a national and international level and move mainly from deprived peripheral regions toward relatively more advanced areas in peripheral or core economies.

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- b) They primarily affect the vulnerable, poor, and marginalized, who are barred in their place of origin from satisfying basic material and subjective needs.
- c) They generate an oversupply of cheap and disorganized labor, exploited by employers and corporations interested in keeping costs down.
- d) They fuel mechanisms of direct and indirect labor exportation, both among low- and high-skilled workers (Delgado, 2013).

**2.10. Ethnic tension and migration**

Some African rulers inherited “split domination” regimes at independence in which one ethnic group dominated civilian political positions and a different group dominated the officer corps.

**2.11. Assaults and Human rights violation by Security personnel**

According to Clement (2009), military justice is paramount in a country where security men have consistently been some of the worst human rights abusers. Gender-based violence is also a serious concern in the country, it does not only affect ordinary people, and even women in government including the army are also affected. Over the past few years the UN has appointed a special adviser on sexual violence in the DRC, EUSEC hired a gender specialist, and a focal point for sexual violence was named within the cabinet of the Congolese Ministry of Defence. It is more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier right now in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The ongoing epidemic of rape and sexual violence in the DRC, particularly in the East but also nationwide, is a vicious example of the security threat to the population. This is a serious concern to a number of community members because, women are raped in front of their husbands and children, thus it causes serious trauma to the children (Davis, 2009).

**3. RESEARCH METHODS**

Researchers in the field of Social science who are interested in exploring and understanding the ways people construct meaning of their experiences, interpretations, and perceptions usually use qualitative research methodology to inform the design of their research study. Qualitative research methods are defined as a set of interpretive, material practices. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Hickson, 2016). The researcher employed a qualitative research method to try to understand the experiences of people. The methodology was very relevant in the sense that it involved interviews where the researcher had to conduct focus group discussions with the immigrants’ communities from DRC.

**3.1. Study area**

The study was conducted in Musina town which falls under the Vhembe District Municipality of Limpopo province, South Africa. It is bordered by Zimbabwe in the north, Makhado and Thulamela in the south, Mozambique in the east, and the Capricorn District in the west. It is the largest municipality of four in the district, making up nearly half of its geographical area. This is the town in Limpopo province where you find a lot of immigrants, especially from the SADC region.

**3.2. Sampling techniques**

Probability sampling was used in this study in order to give all the immigrants the opportunity to participate in this study. Probability sampling is also known as random sampling and this is a sampling that permits every single item from the universe to have an equal chance of presence in the sample and this is so accurate (Etikan and Bala, 2017, Sharma, 2017). Immigrants from DRC who are based in Musina had an equal chance of partaking in this study, however, the researcher chose participants according to the number required in a focus group discussion.

**3.3. Data collection technique**

Data was collected through interviews (FGD) with the immigrants from DRC in Musina town, Limpopo province. According to CIn and Iro (2013), an interview is a specific form of emphasizing, participating, and observing trends that takes place between two or more people. The



interviewer participates by determining the setting or social context in which the interview takes place and asking questions or presenting other stimuli in order to elicit information from the person being interviewed, the interviewee. Therefore, one of the first steps for conducting an interview must be the development of the list of questions to be asked, or the interview schedule. The researcher developed questions or an interview guide before collecting raw data in a group discussion with the participants.

### **3.4.Data Analysis**

Data from the study were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) within qualitative data and is often used by researchers in the humanities and social sciences (Guest, McQueen, and Namey, 2011). The main aim of thematic analysis is to identify themes including emerging themes, and patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue that is been investigated. Moreover, this is much more than simply summarising the data, a good thematic analysis interprets and makes sense of it. A common pitfall is using the main interview questions as the themes. Typically, this reflects the fact that the data have been summarised and organised, rather than analysed (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017).

### **3.5.Findings**

#### **Background and the demographic Characteristics of participants**

The participants (refugees) from DRC arrived in South Africa and settled in Musina, Limpopo Province. The majority of them use Beitbridge to enter the country. Some of them are doing informal jobs like working on farms and some work as security guards and hairdressers at salons. The males respondents decided to invite their wives from DRC to South Africa so that they can be safe. All respondents in this study were the aged of 35 to 45, and some already have children who are attending schools in Musina because they are at the age of going to school.

#### **LACK OF DOMESTIC SECURITY AS A PUSH FACTOR TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN MOBILITY**

The researcher asked the participants a question regarding the push factor, why they left their home for South Africa and this is how they responded. One participant in the group was also an interpreter because he has been in South Africa for so many years and he know and understands English, he indicated that his reasons for leaving his home country were mainly because of fear of prosecution by his national army. The respondent was in prison for the crime he did not commit and spent some days there until he was assisted by the United Nations (UN) peacekeepers. There was no proper trial at all because the army wanted to see him being imprisoned. He was accused of being a rebel of which he was not. There are some of the soldiers who works with the rebels and when the government wants the real rebels, those soldiers would protect the real rebels and replace them with ordinary civilians as rebels and that is how they arrested him and some of the villagers. The soldiers will forcefully give you the name of those rebels as a way of covering up for the real rebels.

When asked about why they left their own country, most of the participants agreed that they left their own country because of a lack of security in their country of origin and fear of prosecution. They believe that there is no life in their own country; the government is not protecting them. Even if you are in the village they will just follow you and forcefully recruit you to come and join the army, they do not care how young you are. Some left their country to neighboring countries like Malawi thinking that they will get peace before coming to South Africa, only to find that the life in Malawi was not good at all.

#### **Lack of Security from the law enforcement agencies**

All the participants in the focus group highlighted that there is no security at all at their homes, the country (DRC) is in serious turmoil and it is difficult for the security agencies like the

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police and army to protect all the citizens. The government needs the youth to join the army and some of them are very much young to be joining the army. Young girls and women are raped every day and their belongings are taken by force by the rebels. Moreover, there is no future at all hence some people decide to flee the country. There are thousands if not millions of Congolese displaced all over the world, and those who can't afford to go far the go to the neighboring countries especially in the SADC region. In addition, the problem is that the ethnic tension that continues to exist in the Eastern part of the country, especially in Kivu continues to fuel the hatred and people lost hope. Some of them are displaced internally while others are displaced internationally.

The government is well aware of what is happening but the leadership is not doing anything, nobody cares, the politicians are busy with their lives and their only concern is their families and their businesses. The maimai armed forces are working with some of the people in government and they are getting inside information and know exactly when the right time to attack is. "Majority of us left the country because it's not safe at all, here in Musina or South Africa I can do anything so that I can take care of myself, any job including security," Said one respondent.

**Assault from the Law enforcement agencies in home country**

The issue of lack of security in the immigrants' countries is so bad in such a way that they are even assaulted by their own law enforcement agencies, and army. The people who are expected to protect them and ensure that they are safe; are the ones who kill them and put the lives of the people in danger. Law enforcement agencies do not care about the civilians, they are working with the armed forces because somehow, they benefit. Joining the army must be a voluntary decision; it must not be by force. The situation is very different in DRC; young boys are forced to join the army not to protect the country but the interests of certain political leaders. Moreover, on the other hand, the M3 rebels are torturing community members in the name of protecting the Tutsi ethnic groups. They continue to kill innocent young men and women, they rape older women and kill them. There is no peace in the country because of these conflicts which are fueled by ethnic tension. The findings are also supported by the views of Clement (2009) in the article called Security reform in the DRC: Forward to the past, Clement argues that DRC has been labeled the 'rape capital of the world' and security forces are the main culprits. This is one reason why the people of DRC are stranded because the law enforcement agencies continue to abuse their powers.

**Forced displacement as a result of domestic security threats**

Domestic security threats make people want to migrate and flee their country. Staying in a country where there are conflicts between different armed forces which eventually affect the ordinary members of the society is a serious risk. The armed forces in DRC are so heartless and women and young girls find it difficult to escape the country. The majority of the population that is dispossessed are men. Most of them as soon as they settle outside DRC they call their women and children to join them so they can escape poverty and killings. The participants in the group highlighted that it was through a connection with the truck drivers that they managed to migrate to South Africa just for them to be safe because it is not safe at all in DRC.

They didn't know where they were going when they left DRC, the truck drivers just transport them to the nearest borders and soon as they get there, they will have to make a plan, as long as they are out of DRC. The truck drivers play a very important role in terms of transporting the immigrants from DRC to the neighboring countries like Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe just for them to escape the killings and threats to their lives. The situation is very bad to such an extent that people are left with no choice but to flee their homes, it's either you leave while you are still alive, or you will never see another day. However, the majority prefers to go to South Africa because it is much safe and there is security. Moreover, for the reason that the economy is doing well as compared to other neighboring countries they come with the hope of securing some job and taking their siblings to South Africa. The majority of them when they were coming and crossing the borders because they crossed about 3 borders before getting into South Africa, they





already knew that they will find their countrymen in South Africa as soon as they cross the border. There is a serious connection between the immigrants and the truck drivers, the truck drivers know exactly where the other compatriots are located. The truck drivers play a role and contribute to the illegal crossing in South Africa.

### **Ethnic tension in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a contributing factor to migration**

Ethnic tension in some part of the African continent is one of the contributing factors to high human mobility and pose a serious threat to national security. The leaders of a particular ethnic group push some ethnic groups out of the country because of the killings. For example, the people in DRC are forced and pushed out of DRC because of the ethnic tension that existed among them. The killing of Rwandans 1997 who was born in DRC by Rwandan parents was also a major blow. Immigrants had to flee DRC to Rwanda and when they get to Rwanda, life was difficult later on, they migrated to South Africa to start a new life. Moreover, there are local people who are killed and kidnapped by the rebels in their home country, especially from another ethnic group. They force them to pay a minimum of ten thousand dollars so that they can release them. These rebels are criminals themselves, all they do is steal and kill and that is a threat to national security whenever the citizens start to realise that their security is compromised, they are left with no choice but to flee. The conflicts in DRC have a serious impact on the society at large, the level of poverty has risen, unemployment is very high and the government is not committed to curbing all these ills.

## **4.CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **4.1.CONCLUSION**

The conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo does not only affects the population of that country alone, but it also has an impact on the neighboring countries, especially in the SADC region. People in DRC are forced to flee their own country because of the ongoing crisis and lack of security in the country. The extremely brutal clashes between groups, armed mainly with axes and machetes, have had very serious consequences for people of all ethnicities in the local population, thousands have been killed, wounded, or traumatized and there has been massive population displacement whereby many had to seek refugees in the neighboring countries. The armed group has now decided to take responsibility for protecting their own ethnic communities because the state has failed to do so. However, the community still argues that it is the responsibility of the state to protect them not the armed groups. The government of DRC has failed to protect its people.

### **4.2.SUGGESTIONS**

The DRC nationals find it difficult to stay in their own country where there is a turmoil and their lives are in danger. The struggle for power by the armed forces continue to make things worse. The people of DRC need to live in peace where there will be no threats to life and their fundamental human rights be respected. Ethnic tension in the country is making things worse and the citizens continue to receive threats and some are tortured because they belong to a certain ethnic group. There will never be peace in DRC until the heads of State in the African continent work together with the leadership of DRC to resolve this ongoing conflict. The African continent cannot afford to fail in bringing stability to the DRC. If only the African leaders are sincere in their hope that African countries will continue to make progress toward greater economic growth and development and toward achieving a more central role in the international community, then the DRC will have to be a significant element in meeting these continental-wide and international aspirations. The conflicts in Africa will come to an end. A sustained intervention is very important in the sense that it will assist in terms of ensuring that the conflicts are resolved.

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